

# ELY & DISTRICT TRAINING GROUP

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Newsletter June 2010

At the recent AGM a healthy set of accounts showing an increased margin of costs over expenditure was circulated. This is due both to the impact of Landskills East funding and also to an increase in courses run. Over the past year 900 course places were filled. The Chairman, Bob Lawrence stood down after 10 years; Liz Johnson took over his role with Phil Kingsmill as vice chairman and Tony Parr continuing as Treasurer. Bob was presented with a framed print to mark his years in office and thanked for his efforts on behalf of the Training Group.

Landskills East funding is part of the RDPE funding and as such should not be affected by government cut backs for the next eighteen months. However, if you are considering doing a BASIS course or any of the 'add ons' such as the plant protection award do book a place for this winter while funding is secure. We will run a Nutrient Management Planning course in Littleport in December. All FACTS qualified advisers must attend this course by December 2014 to maintain their status. It is a 2 day course and can be followed by an exam; the exam is optional but does count towards the Diploma in Agronomy. Everyone must also do an online assessment. Let me know if you would like to book a place for this on December 6th & 7th. If there are enough interested parties I hope to run a funded IOSH Managing Safely course over the winter. This 4 day course, run as 2 x 2 day sessions, is recommended for all owners and managers. Those who have attended in the past found it very useful. Management training in areas such as waste and water management are currently being looked into.

Funding is also available for staff training on most courses that are not classed as legislative. Forklift refresher training falls in to this category so if you have let forklift certificates lapse (the approved code of practice states they should be refreshed every 5 years) then do consider addressing this issue while funding can be obtained.

The Driver CPC training for those who hold LGV licenses went well. If you wish to be updated on this area and have not attended CPC training so far please let me know as I email a separate sub group about CPC issues.

If you want to avoid calling in an electrician to carry out PAT testing then why not train one of your staff to do this? HSE require that the person carrying out PAT testing is competent; a 5 hour course followed by a short multiple choice exam will provide proof of competency. A hand held PAT testing kit including all the relevant labels can be ordered following the course for around £500. I have also now located an instructor for Basic Electrical Awareness; areas covered include wiring plugs, changing fuses, and resetting mcb's and rcd's. If there is sufficient interest both these courses, which can be funded, could be arranged for the winter period.

Land Skills East is supported under the Rural Development Programme for England by EEDA, Defra and the EU, co-ordinated by Lantra and managed by the Rural Enterprise Hub at Easton College in partnership with Norfolk County Council



All those of you who own diggers should note the HSE alert which was recently issued.

'Following a spate of fatal accidents in other industries, farmers are being warned not to use semi-automatic quick hitches if they are missing a retaining pin. HSE wants to ensure any farmer using a quick hitch on an excavator is aware of the serious risks of not following manufacturers' instructions and failing to ensure the pin is in place.'

HSE also issued a reminder about contact with overhead power lines which I have copied below.

'Contact with overhead power lines continues to cause fatalities and serious injuries. Farming operations are also disrupted due to vehicles and equipment being damaged or destroyed. The Energy Network Association (ENA) gives guidance on what to do in the event of a machine or load contacting live cables and emergency contact telephone numbers for all of the UK electricity operators are on its website. We advise that you make a copy of the guidance and take note of your local emergency contact numbers NOW and save it on all drivers' mobile phones. Ensure all staff have read the guidance and we suggest you keep a copy in the cabs of tractors, loaders, combines, lorries etc.'

Training will continue over the summer on a demand led basis, so please let me know if you are looking for anything. As always advance notice will be more likely to secure you the dates you wish; in particular forklift instructors get very busy pre-harvest training students.

Susan Martin

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